1:Redfield E-5 (1926-1927)1930
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ter regions. Therefore there are many villages, walled away one from another by the complicated mountains and lying one above the other on the steps of the stairway. Morelos is, indeed, one of the most densely populated states of Mexico.[1] But the population is one of small villages; there is no town with more than ten thousand inhabitants, and three-quarters of the people live in villages of less than two thousand.[2]

The state is entirely agricultural; there is practically no industry. Before the Conquest it was the seat of many Indian villages; these were united in loose economic and political federations, but each had its own patriotism and its own communal lands. The *hacienda* system, which had for its excuse in the north the geographic facts of an unpopulated region with few resources of water supply, lacked similar excuses in Morelos until the introduction of sugar cane. Sugar cane demands the construction of irrigation works and crushing machinery and so requires large-scale production. Because of this (and because of the early assignment of large groups of villages to individual conquerors as *encomiendas*), by 1910 the *hacienda* system had developed further in Morelos than anywhere else; indeed practically all the land belonged to the large estates of a few individuals.[3] Sugar made Morelos a

[1] In 1910, 84.7 inhabitants per square mile, and seventh in density of population among Mexican states, according to the computation from census figures of Wallace Thompson, *The People of Mexico*, p. 72.

[2] McBride, *Land Systems of Mexico*, p. 144.

[3] McBride says that only 140 of 28,000 heads of families were individual property-holders. One large *hacendado* owned seven times as much land as there was in all the small farms (under 1,000 *hectares*), in the state (*op. cit.*, pp. 143–44).

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# CHAPTER III

## THE ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMUNITY

361 In highly dissected regions the natural community tends to be the valley and the boundaries of the community are then the valley walls. Where the valley floor is wide and fertile a considerable village grows up. But also, in less desirable sites in the valley, in smaller pockets in the surrounding mountains, or on the steeper or less-watered slope on the other side of the mountains, settlements develop which, because of their relatively unfavorable locations, remain small. Upon the market and upon the social organization of the larger valley settlement the lesser hamlets become and remain dependent.

[63] Such a constellation of minor settlements, tributary to a larger village, is exemplified by Tepoztlán and the seven hamlets of San Juanico, Santo Domingo, Amatlán, Ixcatepec, Santiago, San Andres, and Santa Catarina. Tepoztlán contains about four thousand inhabitants; the hamlets each hold two or three hundred. Tepoztlán lies in the wide valley that is protected by high mountain walls on three sides. It is well watered by many springs which burst forth from the mountains at the north side of the valley; this water is piped to the town (as once it was conducted through primitive stone conduits) from reservoirs built at

[162] 312 361

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621 ron of the *barrio*. The small hamlet of Ixcatepec, just
778 outside Tepoztlán, has the same two images and the
796 same two *fiestas*. By arrangement of long standing,
[776] however, Ixcatepec celebrates its *fiestas* a week after
[103] those of Santa Cruz.

621 The *barrios* vary a great deal in size. The number of
[162] houses in each *barrio* is approximately as follows:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| San Pedro | 35 | La Santísima (Trinidad) | 175 |
| Los Reyes | 65 | San Miguel | 150 |
| San Sebastian | 14 | San Domingo | 175 |
| Santa Cruz | 100 | | |

Roughly speaking, there are four large *barrios* and three small ones. The three large *barrios* last named are grouped about the central *plaza*, while the three small ones and Santa Cruz are situated above (west of) the others.[1] The boundaries of the *barrios* are clearly defined. Sometimes a boundary runs in the middle of a street and sometimes the houses on both sides pertain to the same *barrio*, the boundary then running just behind a row of houses. Occasionally there are irregular jogs which take a few houses out of a block and include them in another *barrio*. A whole block of houses, geographically in San Miguel, belong to the *barrio* of Santa Cruz, although almost at the opposite
[794] end of town.[2] The inhabitants of these houses take their turn in the care of the chapel of Santa Cruz, and pay the contribution paid by *barrio* members at the time of the *fiesta* of that *barrio*.

[1] See map, p. 220.

[2] How this came about the writer is unable to say. No informant had any explanation.

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# CHAPTER X

## LITERACY AND LITERATURE

212 The latest Mexican census, that of 1921, enumer-
[162] ated 782 adult males living in the *municipio* of Tepoz-
tlán;[1] of these, it was reported, 438 could read and write. Even when allowance is made for the readiness of the census-taker to report an individual as literate on the slightest evidence, it remains probable that about half of the adults of Tepoztlán can to some de-
[191] gree read and write Spanish. Spanish is the only lan-
[871] guage of the schools; therefore the proportion that can write Nahuatl is certainly much smaller.

[12] Nevertheless, judged by the standard of the modern city, these people are illiterate. And because they are so judged, and because they tend so to judge themselves, they are an illiterate folk, not a preliterate primitive people. Their pre-Columbian ancestors were a preliterate people, for the writing of the Aztecs was no doubt an esoteric art, confined to the priestly class.

871 The first secular school was established in Tepoztlán in the middle of the nineteenth century, but at various periods during the three centuries that preceded that
872 time there were schools of the church. Today two schools are maintained in Tepoztlán, one by the state of Morelos and the other by the federal government.

[1] A total of 3,836 individuals.

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corded for a ten-year period. However, it was not quite as high as the increase for the state of Morelos, which was 36.3 for the same ten-year period.[25]

In analyzing the reasons for the recent rapid rise in the Tepoztecan population we must consider the decades 1920-30 and 1930-40 separately, for the factors at work were distinct. During 1920-30 Tepoztlán was going through a transition period, struggling to get back to normalcy after the devastating effects of the Revolution when practically the entire population was forced to flee. It is therefore probable that the 19 per cent increase in population during 1920-30 was due to the influx of returning families from their forced exile, in addition to the rate of natural increase. After 1930 few families returned to the village. On the contrary individuals began to leave, especially after the construction of the new road in 1936 and increased contacts with the outside. The increase of 29 per cent between 1930-40 must therefore be explained primarily in terms of the sharp decline in the mortality rates, especially infant mortality. This point will be treated later.

In reviewing the history of population growth in Tepoztlán we can distinguish four major periods: two of decline and two of increase. The first period was one of decline following the Conquest. We have suggested that, unlike the findings for central Mexico as a whole where the sharpest decline occurred within the first fifty years after the Conquest, this process in Tepoztlán was delayed and decline did not set in heavily until after 1560. From 1560 to 1804 there was a decline of over 70 per cent. The reasons for this decline have already been mentioned. The second period was one of rapid growth during the nineteenth century and up to 1910. The third period was again one of sharp decline until 1921. And the fourth period has been one of rapid increase. By and large the population curve for Tepoztlán is very much like that of Mexico as a whole and is stark testimony to the many upheavals suffered by Tepoztlán and the nation.

TABLE 4. Population of Tepoztlán and Surrounding Villages of the Municipio

| Village | 1579 | 1890 | 1940 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tepoztlán | 5,824 | 4,163 | 3,239 |
| Santa Catarina | 238 | 1,214 | 991 |
| San Andrés | 235 | 781 | 317 |
| Santiago | 385 | 276 | 216 |
| Amatlán | 481 | 211 | 162 |
| Santo Domingo | 233 | 1,114 | 444 |
| San Juan | 176 | 676 | 499 |
| Izcatepec | —* | 154 | 111 |
| El Parque | — | — | 64 |
| Total | 7,572 | 8,589 | 6,034 |

* Izcatepec became a separate village in the early part of the eighteenth century. Formerly it was considered a barrio of Tepoztlán.

Before leaving the subject of population changes, it might be well to summarize and compare the relative concentration of the population of Tepoztlán proper and the surrounding villages since the sixteenth century. This is shown in Table 4.

[25] Whetten, *Rural Mexico*, p. 39.

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161 It can be seen from Table 4 that the population history of each of the villages has been quite varied. Perhaps the most striking thing about these figures is the much greater concentration of population in Tepoztlán (76 per cent of the total in 1579 as against 48 per cent of the total in 1890 and as compared with 1940). This difference may reflect the early Spanish policy of attempting to concentrate as many people as possible in a central administrative town where control was easier.

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### SEX AND AGE DISTRIBUTION

162 The 1940 sex and age distribution of the population shows a perfectly even distribution by sexes, with 1,615 men and 1,615 women. These figures do not agree with data from the local village census of 1943 with which I have worked and which seem much more reliable. According to this census there was a total population of 3,517, with 1,851 men and 1,666 women. That there are more men than women in the population is also supported by the data on the distribution of recorded births by sex in the village over a ten-year period from 1933 through 1942. From a total of 2,676 recorded births, 1,391 or 52 per cent were male and 1,285 or 48 per cent were female.

A comparison of the age distribution of Tepoztlán with that of rural Mexico as a whole reveals some interesting factors. (See Table 5.)

TABLE 5. Comparison of Distribution of Tepoztecan Population with Population of Rural Mexico by Age Group.

| Age Group | Per Cent of Total Population | |
|---|---|---|
| | Tepoztlán | Rural Mexico |
| Under 5 | 13.03 | 15.3 |
| 5-9 | 15.75 | 15.1 |
| 10-14 | 14.24 | 12.5 |
| 15-19 | 10.17 | 10.0 |
| 20-24 | 4.48 | 7.6 |
| 25-29 | 5.47 | 7.9 |
| 30-34 | 5.94 | 6.5 |
| 35-39 | 7.23 | 6.8 |
| 40-44 | 4.54 | 4.6 |
| 45-49 | 4.24 | 3.7 |
| 50-54 | 3.86 | 2.9 |
| 55-59 | 3.28 | 2.1 |
| 60-64 | 2.66 | 2.1 |
| 65-69 | 1.79 | 1.1 |
| 70-74 | 0.98 | 0.8 |
| 75-79 | 0.74 | 0.4 |
| 80-84 | 0.68 | 0.3 |
| 85-89 | 0.27 | 0.1 |
| 90 and over | — | 0.1 |

On the whole, Tepoztecan figures follow national figures closely. Thus, 28.8 per cent of the Tepoztecan population is less than ten years of age as compared with 30.4 for all of rural Mexico. However, there is a striking difference in the distribution for the age groups from 20 to 30 years. The Tepoztecan figures are

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slightly less than 10 per cent while the national figures are about 15 per cent. The fact that there are relatively few people in Tepoztlán between the ages from 20 to 30 reflects the high mortality rate in Tepoztlán during the years of the Revolution.

Another interesting difference is the much larger percentage of people over age 50 in Tepoztlán, 15.5 per cent for Tepoztlán as compared with 9.9 per cent for rural México. In 1940 there were 95 individuals over age 70 and 39 individuals over 80. The longer age span in Tepoztlán is even more striking when compared with a Tarascan village like Tzintzuntzan, where only one person over 80 was reported.[88] I believe this is related to the relatively higher standard of living in Tepoztlán and to its healthful climate.

### BIRTH AND MORTALITY RATES

The birth rates and death rates are shown in Tables 6 and 7.

TABLE 6. Birth Rate, from 1930 to 1940.

| Year | Births per 1,000 Inhabitants |
|---|---|
| 1930 | 43.8 |
| 1931 | 61.0 |
| 1932 | 64.8 |
| 1933 | 61.6 |
| 1934 | 54.7 |
| 1935 | 51.1 |
| 1936 | 37.2 |
| 1937 | 47.3 |
| 1938 | 41.5 |
| 1939 | 47.0 |
| 1940 | 41.3 |

TABLE 7. Mortality Rate, from 1930 to 1940.*

| Year | Total Deaths | Mortality by Age | | Infant Mortality (Deaths per 1,000 Live Births) | General Mortality |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Less than 1 year | More than 1 year | | |
| 1930 | 105 | 41 | 64 | 198.1 | 22.2 |
| 1931 | 132 | 40 | 92 | 134.7 | 27.1 |
| 1932 | 81 | 21 | 60 | 64.8 | 16.2 |
| 1933 | 133 | 27 | 106 | 85.4 | 25.9 |
| 1934 | 97 | 25 | 72 | 86.8 | 18.4 |
| 1935 | 89 | 23 | 66 | 83.3 | 16.5 |
| 1936 | 71 | 21 | 50 | 101.9 | 12.8 |
| 1937 | 88 | 22 | 66 | 82.1 | 15.5 |
| 1938 | 66 | 15 | 53 | 62.2 | 11.7 |
| 1939 | 130 | 18 | 112 | 64.5 | 21.9 |
| 1940 | 85 | 15 | 70 | 59.8 | 14.0 |

* Based on data from the Departamento de Estadística, Mexico, D.F.

It can be seen from Table 6 that the average birth rate for the eleven-year period from 1930 to 1940, inclusive, was 55.1 per cent. This is considerably higher

[88] See George M. Foster, *Empire's Children: The People of Tzintzuntzan* (México: Imprenta Nuevo Mundo, 1948), p. 29.

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511 556 A score was obtained for a given family by adding the number of points which were obtained for each item. For example, if a family owned 4 hectares of land (the minimum size of holding considered necessary by Tepoztecans for a "decent living" for a family of five), 1 plow, 1 team of oxen, 1 horse, 1 cow, 2 hogs, 2 plum trees, and 1 sewing machine, it would receive a score of 47 points. Since this is a very modest list, even according to Tepoztecan standards, a score of 40 to 50 points may be taken to represent approximately the minimum in property ownership necessary for a self-sufficient farm family. The distribution of scores is presented in Table 45.

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TABLE 45. Frequency Distribution of Tepoztecan Families on Economic Point Scale.

| Score | No. of Families | Per Cent of Total | Sub-Group | Per Cent of Total | Main Group | Per Cent of Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 400–407 | 1 | .11 | | | | |
| 220–253 | 3 | .35 | | | | |
| 200–219 | 2 | .23 | | | | |
| 190–199 | 1 | .11 | B | 1.5 | | |
| 180–189 | 1 | .11 | | | | |
| 170–179 | 3 | .35 | | | | |
| 160–169 | 2 | .23 | | | III | 4.4 |
| 150–159 | 3 | .35 | | | | |
| 140–149 | 3 | .35 | | | | |
| 130–139 | 5 | .58 | | | | |
| 120–129 | 4 | .46 | A | 2.9 | | |
| 110–119 | 4 | .46 | | | | |
| 100–109 | 6 | .70 | | | | |
| 90–99 | 16 | 1.87 | | | | |
| 80–89 | 18 | 2.11 | | | | |
| 70–79 | 17 | 1.99 | | | | |
| 60–69 | 20 | 2.34 | | 13.9 | II | 13.9 |
| 50–59 | 28 | 3.28 | | | | |
| 40–49 | 20 | 2.34 | | | | |
| 30–39 | 74 | 8.67 | | | | |
| 20–29 | 111 | 13.00 | C | 21.6 | | |
| 10–19 | 206 | 24.15 | | | I | 81.5 |
| 1–9 | 213 | 24.02 | B | 49.2 | | |
| 0 | 92 | 10.78 | A | 10.7 | | |

511 556 [735] The most significant features in this frequency distribution are (1) the extremely wide range of wealth differences from zero to over 400 points; (2) the great majority clustering around the lower end of the scale, indicating widespread poverty (note that 81 per cent of the families have scores below what we have tentatively designated as a minimum for decent subsistence); (3) the 92 families having a zero score; and (4) the manner in which, from the distribution of the scores, the families fall into distinct economic groups. Eighty-one per cent of the families are in the lowest group (point score 0–39); 13.9 per cent are in the middle group

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some data on acculturation in relation to standard of living. The questions were: Do you eat bread (as against tortillas)? Do you wear shoes (as against going barefoot or wearing huaraches)? Do you sleep on a bed or a cot (as against sleeping on the ground or on a *tepexco*, a raised frame upon which the *petate* is placed)?

From a special tabulation of the census of Tepoztlán, we were able to correlate the responses to these questions with the family position on the economic scale. The results are shown in Table 46.

TABLE 46. Distribution of Acculturated Habits by Economic Groups.

| Group | Per Cent Who Eat Bread | Per Cent Who Wear Shoes | Per Cent Who Sleep on Beds or Cots |
|---|---|---|---|
| I-A and I-B | 23.20 | 6.46 | 14.12 |
| I-C | 32.30 | 6.78 | 23.18 |
| II | 50.82 | 12.06 | 30.71 |
| III-A | 41.55 | 7.14 | 21.42 |
| III-B | 57.69 | 5.12 | 16.66 |
| Total | 41.11 | 7.51 | 21.22 |

It is clear that eating bread correlates positively with economic position. Thus, 23 per cent of the people in Groups I-A and I-B, as compared with 57 per cent of the people in Group III-B, ate bread. Furthermore, we know from our observation that the wealthier people do eat bread more often and in greater quantities; bread is still a luxury in this village.

Wearing shoes and sleeping in beds do not correlate with wealth, but rather with age. That is, the older people, rich or poor, prefer to use huaraches or go barefoot, and to sleep on the traditional *petate* or on a *tepexco*. We have here a nice example of the factor of selectivity in the adoption of new traits. Families who do not use shoes or beds will often buy sewing machines.

It should be noted that a larger percentage of Group II have adopted new traits, even though their economic resources are less than those of Group III. Table 47 shows the frequency distribution of the age of heads of families by economic categories.

TABLE 47. Age Distribution of Heads of Families by Economic Group.

| Group | Years of Age | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Less Than 29 | 30–49 | 50–69 | 70–99 | Total |
| I-A | 11 | 31 | 18 | 12 | 92 |
| I-B | 63 | 194 | 132 | 30 | 419 |
| I-C | 6 | 88 | 77 | 14 | 185 |
| II | 3 | 46 | 52 | 18 | 119 |
| III-A | 0 | 9 | 15 | 1 | 25 |
| III-B | 0 | 1 | 11 | 1 | 13 |
| Total | 103 | 369 | 305 | 76 | 853 |

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# 19 *old age and death:*

In Tepoztlán a person is thought to be old when he can no longer do his customary work because of physical weakness or when he is obviously gray, wrinkled, and bent with age.[1] This is equally true of women. The menopause is not taken as a sign of old age; women generally welcome it because they will no longer be able to bear children. There is no custom of retiring to a life of rest and leisure; everyone works as long as he is able. (See Fig. 63.) The habit of useful activity keeps old people from becoming a burden to their children or a "social problem." Children are expected to care for old parents and the majority do, but many old people prefer to live alone, even at a miserable subsistence level.[2]

Old age as such is not feared, but dependence upon others and inability to work are generally very much feared. (See Fig. 64.) A "useless" old age is considered a sad thing, and many would prefer death. Chronic or lingering illness is not a serious problem because old people continue to work until their illness becomes acute, and death quickly follows. There are relatively few individuals who are bedridden or severely disabled because of their advanced years.

Old age is traditionally the time when a Tepoztecan receives greatest respect and consideration. Men over fifty are not required to do guard duty, and old people are permitted greater freedom of speech and behavior. They may get drunk, insult others, use sexual terms, laugh and cry, and even urinate in public without censure, although younger people may find it embarrassing. On the whole, however, old people are as restrained in behavior as other adults.

It appears to be the consensus that less and less respect for old people is being shown. It is pointed out that many children now address their grandparents in the familiar *tú* and that some of the old customs of greeting elders, such as the kissing of the hand, have fallen into disuse. In addition to the disappearance of outward signs of respect, there are more sources of conflict between the older and younger

[1] Approximately fifteen per cent of the population of Tepoztlán is over age fifty. Tepoztlán has a higher proportion of old people than does rural Mexico as a whole. At the time of this study, the oldest person in the village was ninety-nine.

[2] Of the forty-five individuals who live alone, the majority are over sixty years of age.